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Home College Series.

Number ~~~~~ \* ~~~~~ *Eighty-Five.*

JOHN WICLIF.

BY DANIEL WISE, D.D.

NEW YORK:  
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CINCINNATI:  
WALDEN & STOWE.

1883.

# Theology Library

## SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY AT CLAREMONT California

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J. H. VINCENT.

NEW YORK, Jan., 1883.



1905  
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## JOHN WICLIF.

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JOHN WICLIF, the "Morning Star" of the Reformation, was born in a little hamlet named Spreswell, situated near the river Tees, in Yorkshire, England. The date of his birth is uncertain. John Lewis, his earliest biographer, fixed on 1324 as its probable year. Vaughn and others have generally accepted his opinion. But Professor Lechler, Wiclif's most exhaustive biographer, gives several plausible reasons for believing that his birth-year was 1320, if not earlier.

Wiclif's ancestors were Saxon thanes. The seat of the family was a manor-house on the banks of the Tees, about half a mile from Spreswell, in the parish of Wycliffe. From the time of William the Conqueror down to the beginning of the seventeenth century this family were lords of the manor and patrons of the parish church.

Thus it appears that Wiclif, if not nobly, was at least honorably and respectably, descended. His birthplace was a "region of great and various beauty, presenting landscape scenery of equal grandeur and softness." But over his child-life, his youth, and the first influences, parental, social, and educational, which contributed to the formation of his exceptionally great character, there lies a veil which even his most learned and industrious biographers have not been able to remove. The incidents of his early manhood are also hidden in equal obscurity. Nevertheless modern opinion, based on the faithful study of his great deeds and of his writings, ranks him not only as "the greatest figure in Oxford history, but along with Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Milton, as one of the four men who have produced the greatest effect on the English language and literature; and still further, as wholly unapproached in the entire history of

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England for his effect on our English theology and our religious life." Yet, notwithstanding the greatness of his achievements, the most painstaking students of his life and times search vainly for more than glimpses of his career until his appearance on the public stage in 1366. He was then in the full prime of manhood, and his intellectual grandeur, his bold and manly attitude in the perilous conflicts of the period, his martyr-like courage, and his saintly life, demonstrated that he had made good use of whatever literary and religious opportunities had been previously allotted him by divine Providence.

What those opportunities were can only be inferred from what is known respecting the system of education then pursued at Oxford, where young Wiclif was educated. There are more than twenty colleges in Oxford to-day. When Wiclif was a boy there were but five—Merton, Balliol, Exeter, Oriel, and University Colleges. Queen's College was not erected until a somewhat later date. But these colleges, as Lechler remarks, "had rather the character of Latin schools and gymnasia than universities proper; at least a multitude, not only of growing young men, but even of mere boys, were to be found at Oxford and Cambridge, and that, not as the pupils of schools collateral to the university, but as members of the university itself." Hence the lower department at Oxford was little less than a preparatory school for mere lads; above this was another somewhat analogous to the modern college; still higher was a body of learned men, professors or fellows, teaching others while they were themselves pursuing such profounder studies as canon and civil law, theology, etc.

From this condition of things at Oxford it is reasonably supposed that young Wiclif, after being taught the rudiments of Latin by his parish priest—local preparatory schools being unknown in his day—was sent up to Oxford, when somewhere between his fourteenth and sixteenth year. The



journey from Yorkshire to Oxford was then one of both fatigue and danger. Public conveyances were unknown. The roads were execrable, and ran through sections very thinly populated. Robberies and murders were far from being infrequent. Hence it is probable that young Wiclif's departure from home was not looked upon as likely to be followed by a speedy return at vacation time; but rather as a farewell for a lengthy, indefinite period, perhaps for life.

As to the studies Wiclif pursued at Oxford, his first two years were doubtless given to the study of grammar, dialectics, and rhetoric. This part of the university course was designated the *Trivium*. His third and fourth years were given to the *Quadrivium*, which included arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music. The six following years, as is supposed, he gave to the study of theology. Hence his student-life included ten years, during which period he no doubt took his academic degrees in their order so far as to become Bachelor of Theology. An analysis of his writings shows that while he made himself fully acquainted with the studies included in his academic course, he was enthusiastically devoted to dialectics, natural philosophy, mathematics, and, above all, to theology. His works further prove that he had thoroughly mastered Latin, which was the conventional language of the university, though not in its classical form. Greek, of which he continued ignorant through life, was not taught in the English universities of Wiclif's day; nor until on the eve of the Reformation, when the scholarly taste of Erasmus led to its general adoption by literary institutions as necessary to a complete scholastic training.

There is no certainty at which college Wiclif spent these ten years. The probabilities favor the claims of Balliol. It is supposed that after taking his degree as Master of Arts he was elected a fellow and seneschal of Merton; and that in 1361 he returned to Balliol as its master. He was also

presented with the parish of Fillingham the same year, with episcopal permission to remain at Oxford and to employ a curate to do his parish work. In 1365 Simon Islip, Archbishop of Canterbury, founded a hall for poor students at Oxford, to which he gave the name of Canterbury Hall. He appointed Wiclif to be its warden because of his learning, "estimable life, fidelity, circumspection, and diligence." But Archbishop Islip dying the following year, his successor, Simon Langham, deposed Wiclif, and elevated a monk named Woodhall to its headship. This was a victory for the monastic orders, with whom in his later life our as yet unrecognized reformer was destined to fight many desperate battles.

We have now reached the period in Wiclif's life—1366—which saw him emerge from the comparative seclusion of the halls at Oxford, and enter upon the more public stage of national life. Then, says Dr. Storrs, "he began to gather that broader brightness about his name which was finally to become a shining and enduring splendor."

He is now in the full prime of vigorous manhood. He has spent some three decades among learned men at a time when Oxford was enjoying "its golden age of intellectual activity," and was "the center toward which the highest scholarship, the most supremely gifted minds of the age, gravitated from all parts of Europe." Some of the disciples of the learned and progressive Roger Bacon were yet among its teachers. Richard Fitzralph, the comprehensive writer; Thomas Bradwardine, the great and devout theological thinker; John Estwood, the first astronomer of the age, and other men of liberal ideas and independent thinking had given the impulse of their active minds to its crowds of students. Outside the university a national spirit was rising in its might, eager to throw off the weight with which centuries of misrule and ecclesiastical corruption had oppressed it. The victories of Edward III. on the Continent had raised England immensely in the estimation of foreigners. But these successes

had been followed by defeats which irritated the minds of the English people, and yet stimulated the long-crushed Saxon spirit to assert itself against any further despotic encroachments on public liberty by the ruling Norman families. Besides these secular conditions, the aggressions of the Roman Catholic Church on the liberties of the nation were exciting the opposition of both Norman rulers and Saxon subjects. The former saw with disgust that the papal clergy, mostly foreigners appointed by Rome, besides possessing about one third of the real estate of the country, held most of the high secular offices in their possession; the latter, who before the Conquest had contended for a self-ruled national Church, in preference to one governed by the Curia at Rome, were ripe for almost any measures tending to check the growth of this disliked and grossly corrupt ecclesiastical power. Hence the country was in a transition state. Old things were losing their hold on both the respect and affections of the people, who were blindly groping for something new and better.

These questions were discussed with more or less freedom at Oxford during Wiclif's long residence there. As a lecturer and disputant on science, theology, canon and civil law, he must have often thought, written, and spoken upon them. His Saxon feelings and the impressions derived from what he heard during his boyhood among a people who had never abandoned either their Saxon ideas or their antipathies to Norman and papal rule, naturally inclined him to sympathize with the liberal ideas germinating at Oxford. And this inclination was strengthened by his college associates, most of whom at Balliol and at Merton were from the northern countries, where the Saxon element had its chief strength. All these influences tended to make him a reformer. His natural courage and self-reliance, his acute conscientiousness, and his profound religious convictions did the rest. And therefore, when the hour struck which called for an exponent



and advocate of liberal ideas, he proved himself to be the man.

Wiclif, as Lechler claims, on highly probable grounds, was summoned, with six other Masters of Arts, by Edward III., to sit in the Parliament of 1366. The great question to be discussed was the claim of the pope for the payment of the annual tribute of one thousand marks imposed on the craven-hearted King John in 1213, but which the English had neglected to pay for the last thirty years. It involved not only the dignity and independence of the kingdom, but also the ecclesiastical and feudatory rights of the pope. It was because of its ecclesiastical bearing that the presence of such a famous doctor of theology as Wiclif had now become was required in Parliament. Though as yet an obedient son of the Church, his patriotic views concerning the proper relations of the English Church to the papacy were well known at Oxford and in other influential circles. His bold avowals of these advanced ideas, being reported to Edward, doubtless led to the royal summons. The precise part he took in Parliament is unknown. The bold utterances of several lords, and the final declaration of both Lords and Commons, that King John had no right to subject the country to the feudal superiority of the pope implied by the tribute, and that if the pope persisted in his claim, which was as much opposed to the Gospel as to the rights of England, it would be resisted even to war, contained ideas and expressions so similar to the well-known theories and style of Wiclif, that it is thought much of their inspiration was derived from him. This view is sustained by the fact that, after Parliament adjourned, an anonymous doctor of theology addressed a challenge to him by name, as if he were responsible for the anti-papal doctrines of the Parliament. Nothing daunted, Wiclif responded in a polemical tract, in which he boldly upheld the independence and sovereignty of the State in its relations to the Roman Catholic Church. This tract led the unpatriotic

supporters of Rome to place a mark upon his name as one doomed to fall beneath the vengeance of that corrupt Church.

But their time to strike him had not yet come. England was passing through a period of military and naval disaster. The financial burdens of the people were oppressive, and they were in no mood to listen to the demands of their highly beneficed clergy, who were rolling in wealth. So strongly indeed did popular feeling set against the Church that the Parliament of 1371 laid very heavy taxes on her hitherto untaxed property, and encouraged the king to remove several prelates from high offices of State, and to replace them with laymen. In the patriotic spirit of these acts Wiclif entered the polemical field, by writing an attack on the proceedings of the pope's nuncio, who was then traveling over England in princely state, collecting dues from the clergy and Peter's pence from the people for the replenishment of his master's insatiable treasury. In this paper Wiclif bravely entered on perilous ground. He denied that any thing was right merely because the pope did it; he claimed that the incumbent of that office was pre-eminently bound to exemplify the Christian virtues in his own person; he censured the papal collections, and he strongly hinted at that far-reaching principle which was to become the root of the reformation—"that Holy Scripture is for Christians the rule and standard of truth."

Though the eyes of his deeply offended papal adversaries glared angrily upon him, they did not yet dare to lay violent hands upon him. They saw that the king highly esteemed him, since, in 1374, he appointed him on a commission which he sent to the ancient and wealthy city of Bruges, in Flanders, to meet the pope's nuncios, for the purpose of settling the ecclesiastical grievances of which the English Parliament had so loudly and justly complained. This commission accomplished nothing beyond a concordat so cunningly

worded that it had no practical value; yet it helped to prepare Wiclif for the work he was destined to perform. It, no doubt, increased his intimacy with John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, who was also at Bruges on an embassy to arrange for peace between England and France. It is likely, indeed, that our reformer owed his appointment to this nobleman, whom we shall presently see stepping forward as his protector against his papal enemies. Lechler thinks, with good reason, that what Wiclif learned at Bruges of the spirit and vices of the Roman Church contributed not a little to that development of his character which was soon to transfer him from the platform of a patriot, fighting politico-ecclesiastical abuses, to that of a spiritual reformer, working for the scriptural enlightenment of a people long held in the bonds of superstition by a corrupt priesthood. Wiclif learned the same lesson at Bruges that Luther was destined to learn at a later period in the shadow of the Vatican at Rome.

Wiclif had exchanged his parish of Fillingham for that of Ludgershall in 1368. He had also obtained a prebend at Aust. But in 1374 Edward III., probably in recognition of his services at Bruges, made him rector of Lutterworth. Opposed as he was to the prevailing practice of one man holding several benefices at one time, he consistently surrendered both his prebend and his former parish, and gave himself to the duties of his new rectory.

But the cloud, growing black for some time with priestly hate, was now about to burst upon his devoted head. The Roman court had censured the doctrines of his tract. His bold words and the inspiration given by his speeches and writings to the strong petition of the Parliament of 1376, called by the people, on account of its anti-papal spirit, the "Good Parliament," brought matters to a crisis early in 1377. Instigated by Courtenay, Bishop of London, the convocation, or clerical parliament, summoned Wiclif to its tribunal to



answer the censures pronounced, in a bull of Gregory XI., against the alleged heresies found in his tract.

The convocation met in old St. Paul's, London. Wiclif obeyed its summons; but he did not appear alone at that clerical bar. His noble friend, the Duke of Lancaster, and Lord Percy, Grand Marshal of England, appeared at his side, as did also five Bachelors of Divinity, ready to act, if needed, as his advocates. These noblemen were followed by a band of armed men. The bishops before whom the heretic was to appear were assembled in the Lady Chapel. Percy, with his retainers, advanced through the crowded church to clear a passage for Wiclif and Lancaster. The clanking of swords and the sound of many angry voices roused the imperious Courtenay's anger, and he sternly said to Percy:

"Had I known beforehand, my lord, the style in which you were going to play the master within the church, I would have barred your entrance."

These defiant words roused the rage of Lancaster, who retorted, "I am resolved to be the master here in spite of bishops!"

At last Wiclif and his powerful friends passed into the chapel. The reformer looked with unquailing eye on his judges. There sat the archbishop surrounded by his bishops and by many dukes and barons of the realm. Before them stood Wiclif, "a tall, thin figure, covered with a long light gown of black color, with a girdle about his body; the head adorned with a full, flowing beard, exhibiting features keen and sharply cut; the eye clear and penetrating; the lips firmly closed in token of resolution—the whole man wearing an aspect of lofty earnestness, and replete with dignity and character."

To this noble figure Percy, the Grand Marshal, said, "Be seated, sir priest. You have need to rest yourself, for you will have many questions to answer."

Upon this Courtenay, pale with rage, responded, "No!

Wiclif must not be seated here. It is neither lawful nor becoming that he should sit in the presence of his judges. He must stand!"

This haughty language led to a violent dispute between Courtenay and Percy. Lancaster soon took part in this war of words. The assembly was thrown into disorder and speedily adjourned. Protected by Percy and Lancaster, Wiclif left the church without having opened his lips. But some rash threatenings from Lancaster's lips against the Bishop of London had enraged the irascible Londoners, who, while not unfriendly to Wiclif, would not quietly submit to threats against their bishop. A riot ensued. Lancaster and Percy escaped the fury of the mob by placing themselves beyond its reach. It required the mediation of the Princess of Wales to effect a reconciliation between the duke and the citizens. This being accomplished, Wiclif, for the time being, was let alone, the bishops directing their efforts chiefly against Lancaster. In truth, their citation of Wiclif was intended as much to irritate that scheming politician as it was to place the reformer under ban.

Though baffled by the powerful friends of Wiclif, the bishops did not abandon their purpose to destroy him. Collecting a series of doctrinal propositions from his university lectures and disputations, they sent them to Rome. Gregory responded in five bulls, addressed in part to the bishops, and partly to the king, and to the Chancellor of Oxford University. He gave the English episcopate plenary authority to inquire, cite, arrest, and send the offending heretic to Rome. These bulls, by invoking the aid of so many great authorities, seemingly placed Wiclif in the condition of an unfortunate fly which a cunning spider contrives to environ within a net-work of threads. His enemies were confident that he could not escape.

Yet they were forced to wait for their prey until the prorogation of the Parliament, which assembled, after the

death of Edward III., in July of that year. The spirit and action of that body was decidedly anti-Romish. It even requested our reformer to draw up an opinion, for the recently crowned boy-king, Richard II., and his great council, with respect to the "competency of the English kingdom by law to restrain the treasure of the land from being carried off to foreign parts, although the pope should demand its export in virtue of the obedience due to him and under the threat of Church censures." Wiclif met this request, and proved, by unanswerable arguments, that England was fully competent to pass such a law.

This bold assertion of the nation's rights, as against papal claims, exasperated Wiclif's enemies almost to madness. And when Parliament was prorogued they sought to give practical effect to the five bulls. Once more, therefore, this devoted man found himself in presence of his enemies for trial in the chapel of the archbishop at Lambeth.

He stood alone at first. Lancaster, the young king's brother, despoiled of his former influence at court, was no longer at his side. But the undaunted Wiclif boldly replied in writing to their charges, defending himself conclusively on every point. Of course, his judges were unconvinced by his arguments. But when Sir Henry Clifford appeared in the chapel with a command from the king's mother, that the bishops should abstain from pronouncing any final judgment, and when certain citizens of London forced their way into the assembly, and, in menacing tones, assured his now alarmed judges that their condemnation of a patriot who was loved and honored by the people might prove a serious matter for themselves, they were alarmed for their own safety. To cite Walsingham, a papist chronicler, "They were seized with such terror that one would have supposed they had no horns on their miters more." Hence they were obliged to content themselves with simply prohibiting the reformer from preaching in future on the censured propositions. And then



they let him go, unpledged, to look after his parish at Lut-terworth; to preach occasionally for a season at his univer-sity; and, as it proved, to work greater ill then before to the papacy by devoting himself less to ecclesiastico-political questions, and more to the spiritual welfare of the people of England.

In 1378 certain cardinals opposed to Urban VI. elected a rival pope, Clement III. This schism and the violent spirit in which these popes assailed each other completed our reformer's alienation from the papacy. "These popes," said he, "are both false popes; they have nothing to do with the Church. As is manifest from their doings and their lives, both are apostates and limbs of the devil, instead of members of the body of Christ." And he counseled his followers to support neither, but "to look quietly on and let the two halves of antichrist destroy each other."

Turning aside, therefore, from the political side of his controversy with Rome, Wiclif now gave the full force of his great intellect to measures for teaching the people of England the way of life. Among his Oxford pupils he found many young men who caught inspiration from his piety and were willing to devote themselves to evangelistic work, even at the peril of liberty and life. These noble youths he trained for the work of preaching the pure Gospel in its simplicity, and then sent them forth, first to the villages around Oxford, and next through the country generally. These devoted young men, prototypes of Wesley's itinerant preachers, went into the highways clad "in long garments of coarse red woolen cloth, barefoot, and staff in hand." For Christ's sake they wandered from one place to another, teaching and preaching in church, chapel, or open air, depending for support on the voluntary gifts of the people. At first these "poor priests," as they were popularly named, were educated and ordained men. Subsequently Wiclif, finding that an unlearned layman was often a more fruitful preacher than

one bred in the cloisters of a university, authorized many such to unite with his "poor priests." Thus combining both classes into one band of "evangelical men," he gave the English people a precious opportunity to hear that pure Gospel which the lazy, corrupt, beneficed priests, who occupied their churches, had long neglected to preach.

The spirit in which he originated this movement he expressed in these characteristic words: "If," said he, "begging friars stroll over the country preaching the legends of saints and the history of the Trojan war, we must do for God's glory what they do to fill their wallets, and form a vast itinerant evangelization to convert souls to Jesus Christ." To his itinerants themselves he said, "Go and preach; it is the sublimest work; but imitate not the priests whom we see, after the sermon, sitting in the ale-houses, or at the gaming-table, or wasting their time in hunting. After your sermon is ended, do you visit the sick, the aged, the poor, the blind, and the lame, and succor them according to your ability." That men could be found in that dark age willing to enter the work of the ministry under such hard and perilous conditions, is itself a surprising fact. That Wiclif, by the force of his teaching, his self-denying example, and his profound sympathy with the spiritual needs of the people, could inspire no inconsiderable number of men with a purpose to seek the salvation of men at such cost to themselves, is incontestable proof that he was a mighty master spirit, endowed with those high qualities which belong to none but those who are leaders of men.

But why not give the word of God to the people of England in their own language? was a question which arose in Wiclif's devout mind. Parts of Holy Scripture had been already translated into Saxon, and Norman French, but these fragments were mostly hidden in libraries inaccessible to the people. After due deliberation, Wiclif resolved to attempt the task of translating *the whole Bible*. It was a great work,

especially as, not being acquainted with Greek, he had to depend almost wholly on the Latin Bible of St. Jerome, now known as the Vulgate. Calling in the aid of some learned sympathizers who wrought on the Old Testament under his supervision, he chiefly devoted himself to the translation of the New. In 1382, it is believed by Lechler and others, the entire Bible was, for the first time, in a language which English readers could understand.

In the absence of the then-unknown art of printing this translation had to be multiplied by copyists. As fast as these slow toilers could reproduce it in portions, the "evangelical men" took these precious parts into the houses of the people and, to the delight and profit of many, read the life-giving words in their hearing. The cost of the entire book was so great that few could afford to purchase it. Yet the parts put in circulation sowed precious seed, which not only begat spiritual life in many at that time, but also silently grew in the national mind and prepared it for the reformation which, some two centuries later, rescued the national Church of England from the grip of the papal court.

To these great measures inimical to Romanism Wiclif added still another offense. About the year 1380 he published a tract against the doctrine of transubstantiation. This very naturally caused a very great sensation. The Oxford authorities condemned it. The "peasants' rebellion," on a question of personal rights, occurring about that time, Wiclif's enemies sought to stamp him with infamy by falsely charging it to the influence of his writings and of his "poor priests." Then his old enemy, Courtenay, now Archbishop of Canterbury, called an assembly of "ecclesiastical notables," from whom he obtained a condemnation, not of Wiclif personally, but of his thesis on transubstantiation as heretical. Others of his theses they pronounced erroneous. Besides this, they attributed the recent disturbances to "the inflammatory doctrines of the itinerant preachers."

Countenanced by the king, the hierarchy proceeded to give practical effect to these censures by acts of persecution. They succeeded so far that, after a struggle, Wiclif's adherents in Oxford were silenced, and many of his itinerant preachers were driven from the field. Wiclif himself was debarred from preaching at his university, and, during the last two years of his life, was compelled to confine his labors to his beloved parish at Lutterworth. Powerful as were his enemies, eager as they were to deprive him of his liberty and even to take his life, they dared not attempt either. They knew that the House of Commons was largely in sympathy with him, and also that his friends in that body represented an anti-papal public opinion which it was not prudent for them to arouse by proceedings against the person of this mighty man.

Hence Wiclif lived quietly in his parish, still writing with no abatement of force, courage, or zeal, until the thirty-first day of December, 1384, when he passed quietly away from the stormy scenes of his life into "that rest which remains for the people of God." The cause of his death was paralysis, which first struck his body toward the close of 1382, but did not affect his mind. The second attack occurred in his church, December 28, 1384, while he was hearing mass. He sank to the ground speechless, but retained his consciousness until the 31st, when he was added to "the church of the first-born in heaven."

To a portraiture of Wiclif's character little space can be given in this small tract. The facts already stated make it apparent that he possessed a strong, broad, manly mind, clear and deep in its perceptions; firm, tenacious, even heroic, in its purposes, and receiving its inspirations from a heart which was a well-spring of moral feeling. His emotions were indeed ethical rather than spiritual, albeit he was a spiritually minded man to whom God's Word was the light he was prepared to follow whithersoever it might lead. His



integrity to his convictions was perfect, his honor unimpeachable, his unselfishness remarkable, his courage unexcelled. His industry was untiring. Hence, besides his college and parish duties, he wrote, as catalogued by Dr. Shirley, one hundred and sixty one works, of which ninety-six were in Latin and sixty-five in English. Lechler very fitly calls him the "first personal embodiment of the evangelical reformer." Others had written and spoken before him, but he was the first who gave the whole strength of his mind to the work of purifying the Church from the errors and corruptions which had despoiled her of her beauty during the political and social transitions of the Middle Ages.

Forty-one years after his death the papist Council of Constance decreed the burning of this great man's remains. Taken from beneath the chancel of Lutterworth Church, his bones were reduced to ashes, which were cast contemptuously into the river Swift. "But," says the quaint Fuller, "the Swift did convey his ashes into Avon, Avon into Severn, Severn to the narrow seas, they into the main ocean. And thus the ashes of Wiclif are the emblem of his doctrine, which is dispersed all the world over."

## JOHN WICLIF.

[THOUGHT-OUTLINE TO HELP THE MEMORY.]

1. Birth year? Place? Ancestors? Early instruction? Youth and early manhood? Modern opinion of Wiclif?
2. His opportunities for education? Character of Oxford University in Wiclif's time? His probable course of study? The *Trivium*? The *Quadrivium*? Theological study? Academic degrees? Studies he loved best? Study of Greek at Oxford? From which college was he graduated? Merton College? Return to Balliol? His parish? Canterbury Hall?
3. Beginning of his public life? Influences which helped form his character? Oxford leaders of thought? The new national spirit? Norman and Saxon hostility to Romanism? Effects on Wiclif's mind? Early associations? College associates?
4. Wiclif in Parliament? Inspiration he gave to that body? Popular feeling? The pope's nuncio? Wiclif at Bruges? Effect on his character? Rector of Lutterworth? At the bar of convocation? His powerful friends? His hearing at Lambeth? Effect of the papal schism? Poor priests? Translation of the Bible? Before an assembly of notables? Last years and death? Character? Works?

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